



Program Focus —

The Wetland Reserve Program's (WRP) primary focus is the hydrologic and vegetative restoration of drained, altered and degraded wetlands. Much of the historic wetland losses in Virginia have been associated with agricultural conversion of wetlands to cropland. The WRP is reversing this trend in the agricultural community.

WRP easements ensure that the functions and values of the restored wetlands will remain in the future. Benefits associated with wetland restoration are increased wildlife habitat, improved water quality, expanded habitat for threatened and endangered species, greater bio-diversity and reduced flooding.

2001 Wetlands Reserve Program

Virginia Summary

Overview

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to restore, enhance, and protect wetlands. Landowners have the option of enrolling eligible lands through permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements. The goal of the program is to restore wetlands to natural conditions, including both hydrologic and vegetative restoration.

In Virginia, the majority of the wetland restoration acreage will become mature hardwood forested wetlands. NRCS works with many partners in the restoration efforts. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Department of Forestry, Ducks Unlimited, and The Nature Conservancy have all contributed material and/or services to the WRP.

Accomplishments

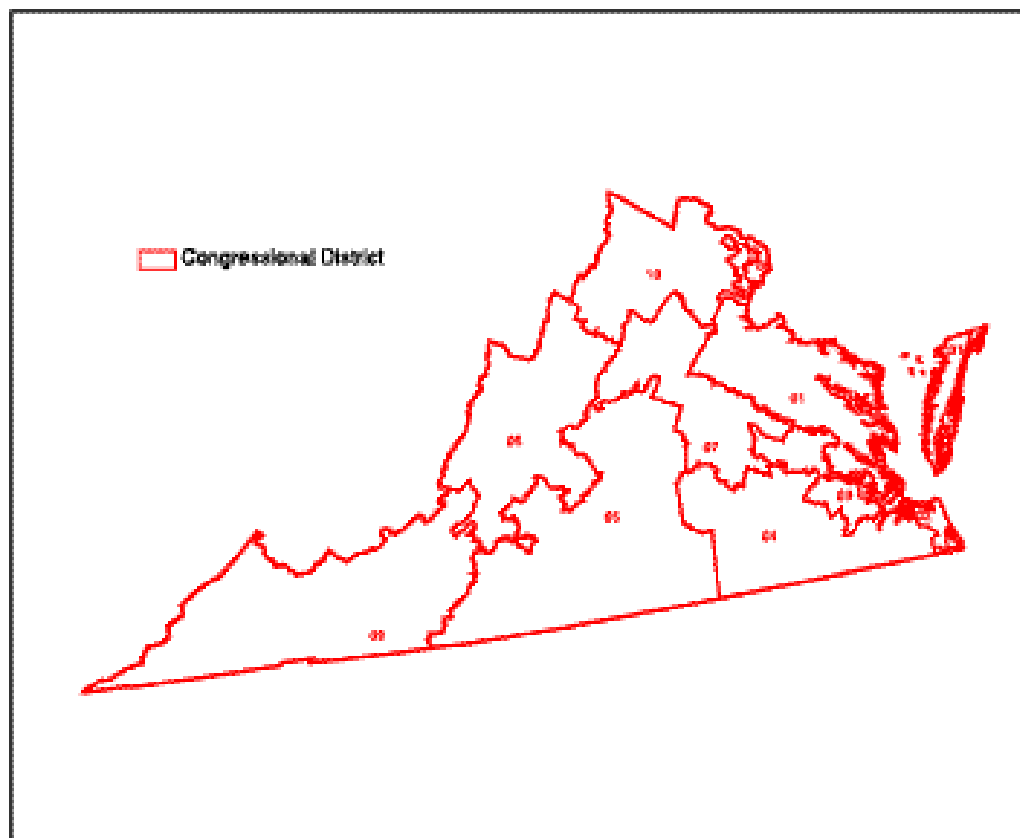
Virginia has enrolled a total of 40 contracts on 1,098 acres. In fiscal year 2001, two tracts totaling 53 acres have been enrolled in the program under the perpetual easement option. NRCS contracted and completed the hydrologic restoration on 2 easements totaling 56 acres, and the vegetative restoration on 2 easements totaling 160 acres. Three WRP sites have been used for education and research purposes.

Program Benefits

Restoring the function and values of wetlands has many positive environmental effects, especially when an adequate buffer or riparian area is included in the easement area. In addition to environmental benefits, social benefits may include aesthetics, recreation, and income from utilizing native plants. The program also provides the landowner with economic benefits as this program pays the appraised agricultural value of the land. Generally the land placed into this program has a high maintenance cost for agricultural production.

State contact: John Myers, Environmental Specialist, USDA/NRCS
1606 Santa Rosa Rd., Richmond VA 23229 Phone: 804-287-1668

Virginia WRP/EWP Easements by Congressional District



Virginia Dollars and Contracts

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2001		Cumulative Total (95-01)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	90,000	2	—	—
District 2	84,000	1	—	—
District 5	100,000	2	—	—
District 10	40,000	1	—	—
State Totals	314,000	6		

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.